

London's Royal Parks

Paul Rabbitts

**2:00pm on Wednesday
21st October 2026
at the Assembly House**



London's royal parks are among its most beautiful and beloved spaces: just as much as the Houses of Parliament, Buckingham Palace or St Pancras Station, the mere mention of Hyde or Regent's Park is enough to evoke the capital in all its glory for residents and tourists alike. They have a grand history, some were royally owned as far back as the Norman Conquest, others were acquired by Henry VIII during the Reformation, and since being opened to the public during the eighteenth century, they have hosted some of London's great events, including the Great Exhibition and innumerable jubilees and celebrations. This talk tells the story of all eight of the parks from the point when they were acquired by the

monarchy until the present day, including the major historic moments and events with which they are associated.

Dr Paul Rabbitts has nearly 40 years of experience in designing, managing and restoring urban parks across the UK, from the Scottish Borders to the South East of England. As a qualified Landscape Architect and current Head of Environment Services (responsible for parks, bereavement services and car parking) for Norwich City Council, he is also a published author and regular contributor to journals and periodicals.

Dr Rabbitts talk will last an hour in total, 45 minutes for the talk, followed by questions and discussion in the last 15 minutes.

Attendance is free to members (**please remember your membership cards - we will be happy to accept an image of your membership card on a mobile device**), non-members will be asked to pay £3.50.

We would like everyone to be in their seats by 2pm at the latest to minimise interruptions.

Apart from one month, the programme has been fixed for the rest of 2026 (see website).

I am very grateful for members who have given me suggestions for potential speakers. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have heard someone give a talk which might be of interest to our members.

**Best Wishes
Peter Threadkell
U3A Committee**

Enquiries to: speakers@u3anor.org
Further Information: [Norwich u3a - Learn, Laugh, Live](#)